

HKU SUMMER INSTITUTE FOR LINGUISTIC RESEARCH

Linguistic diversity in Asia: Theories and Methods

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG • 7-18 JULY 2014



**LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY IN ASIA:
STUDENT CONFERENCE**

Saturday 12 July 9:30-12:30

HKU Main Campus, Library Extension 5

<http://linguistics.hk.hk/summer>

Conference program

9.30-10.30 am	Poster session:	
	P1 A Case Study of Two Singlish Conversations in View of Sociolinguistics	Fangbo LIAO
	P2 Discovering Sound Symbolism Through Chinese Ideophones	Yang XIAO
	P3 The Teaching of Students with Special Educational Needs, SEN, in Hong Kong	Charles Ka Shing KO
	P4 An acoustic study of retroflex and dental stops in Punjabi	Qandeel HUSSAIN
	P5 A Comparison of Aspectual System in Four Sinitic Languages	Ceylon Shiliang ZHANG
	P6 Challenge of developing and orthography for an unwritten endangered language of China	Norah Xueqing ZHONG
	P7 A grammatical analysis of the 'induced creaky tone' in Burmese	Mimi TIAN
	P8 A Postmodern Curriculum Perspective on Oral ESP Teaching	Dan CHEN
	P9 The expression of time in Mandarin	Nadine OTTING
	P10 Process description of translating English verbs with imperative aspect to Philipino and their translatability	Mariyel Hiyas C. LIWANAG
	P11 Diversity and homogeneity: Images of ethnic minorities in Hong Kong	Kara FLEMING
	P12 Is Vocabulary Knowledge Alone Sufficient for Second Language Lexical Inferencing?	Sihui KE
	P13 Tone Sandhi in the Nanjing dialect	Chris OAKDEN
	P14 Tones in Cantonese English and Musical Intervals	Suki YIU
	P15 The Emerging of Evidentiality: a Case Study on Naxi	Jun LIU
	P16 An Analysis of Suffixes "-er" and "-zi" as Countable Markers in the Xuzhou Dialect	Zhe GAO
	P17 Influence of the German multiethnolect Kiezdeutsch and Turkish first names on the grading of school essays: A language attitude study	Linda JOHN
10.30-11.30 am	Light refreshments will be served Presenters free to peruse other posters	
11.30am-12.30pm	Invited talk by Dr Mark Donohue	

A Case Study of Two Singlish Conversations in View of Sociolinguistics P1
Fangbo LIAO

This article is an analysis of two conversations in Colloquial Singaporean English (CSE), in differing their degrees of familiarity. The analysis focuses on mainly three sociolinguistic fields, namely: sociolinguistic phonological variables, negotiating social relation (politeness) and the dynamics of interaction (turn-taking). By studying these aspects, this article compares and contrasts the similarities and differences in the two conversations.

Discovering Sound Symbolism Through Chinese Ideophones P2
Yang XIAO

This research tries to understand the nature of sound-symbolism from a new perspective by looking at ideophones in Mandarin Chinese. Ideophones has been claimed to share features from both onomatopoeia words and common content words. The exploration of sound-meaning correlation in the domain of ideophones may shed light on the general research in sound-symbolism.

There are three major parts in this presentation. In the first part, the previous model raised by Von Humboldt on sound symbolism is reexamined and a new tentative model is built to describe the nature of sound symbolism and to classify different sound-meaning correlations. In the second part, there is a discussion about the general characteristics of ideophones in various languages and its significance in the research of sound symbolism. Also, the definition of Mandarin ideophones will be constituted. In the last part, the mandarin ideophones will be analyzed from both syllable level and phoneme level. Interestingly, it is found that the meaning of a sound is to some extent reflected by the articulation of that sound. Afterwards, there is a discussion about how the results of this study could be contributed to prove the two hypotheses presented in the new model.

Contemporary Politeness P3
Ka Shing Charles KO

The present research aims to explore various perspectives on politeness, in particular, to examine those centred around English and Chinese politeness. On the one hand, I will discuss in what ways is the definition of politeness in Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) politeness theory more or less specific than the general social meaning of po- liteness that we are familiar with, illustrated with English (translated from Chinese) examples. I will also illustrate some politeness phenomena which are not included in Brown and Levinson's list of politeness strategies, with Chinese and English examples.

An acoustic study of retroflex and dental stops in Punjabi

P4

Qandeel HUSSAIN

Retroflexes typically show F2-F3 convergence near the vowel offset, differentiating retroflexes from dentals (Ohala & Ohala, 2001). However our recent research on Punjabi (Hussain, Harvey & Demuth, 2014) shows that the formant transitions of retroflexes and dentals in the context of a preceding /i/ vowel are not different: there is no F2-F3 convergence in this environment. This raises the question as to how the contrast between retroflexes and dentals is maintained in this context. In studies of other languages, retroflexes have been shown to acoustically differ from dentals in having a shorter closure and burst duration (Tabain, 2012; Anderson & Maddieson, 1994). In this paper we show that measures of closure duration, burst duration and Center of Gravity (CoG) of the burst reliably differentiate the retroflex and dental contrast in Punjabi, even in the context of preceding /i/ vowel, where formant transitions do not distinguish the two.

A Comparison of Aspectual System in Four Sinitic Languages

P5

Ceylon Shiliang ZHANG

Chinese languages are traditionally viewed in a singular concept. However, recent studies have discovered that the Sinitic family is far from being a single one, not only in phonology but also in morphosyntax. Evidence can also be partially found in the aspectual system.

This paper will examine and compare the aspectual system in four representative Sinitic languages: standard Mandarin, Wuhan dialect, Changsha Xiang and Cantonese. Further investigations will reveal that there are different aspects in the four languages. Even for the same aspect, different languages will adopt different linguistic manners. Moreover, phenomena of language contact can be clearly perceived between Wuhan Dialect and Changsha Xiang.

The discovery also gives more insight in the issue of how to treat the Sinitic languages: besides genetic inheritance, language contact is increasingly an indispensable element in contemporary studies of Chinese linguistics.

Challenge of developing an orthography for an unwritten endangered language in China

P6

Norah Xueqing ZHONG

Western Yugur language is spoken by one of the smallest ethnic minorities in north-western China, Gansu province, who mostly live in Sunan Autonomous County with about 2600 speakers. Western Yugur, as a Turkic language, is believed to share the same language origins as modern Uyghur, however it is a distinct language.

This project will eventually compile a trilingual dictionary (Western Yugur-English-Chinese) which requires a practical and usable orthography. Local speakers prefer a

readable and faithful representation. It is essential to provide a practical orthography which is both accurate and acceptable to the speakers and learners of Western Yugur, which will be adaptable for regional variation. Linguistic workshops will bring local people together and work together on phonologies and orthographies to create a practical orthography. Hopefully a final practical orthography will be approved by and used in local speech communities to carry on stories, songs and wisdom into writing for current and future generations.

A grammatical analysis of the ‘induced creaky tone’ in Burmese

P7

Mimi TIAN

The present paper investigates the conditions and effects of the ‘induced creaky tone’, a kind of grammatical tonal alternation in modern standard Burmese. The ‘induced creaky tone’ involves a process in which word forms with inherent low or high tone on the last syllable change into forms with the creaky tone. These alternations have the grammatical functions like marking possessor and object. In both situations, the tonal change can occur either alternatively or together with a segmental particle. The current paper gives a comprehensive description of relevant phenomena related to the ‘induced creaky tone’, based on interviews with native speakers. The description will serve as a basis for a grammatical analysis that explores the possibilities of representing a tonal morpheme in the syntactic structure of a sentence. It provides a direct comparison of segmental morphemes and tonal morphemes with the same function in the same language. It may also shed light on other theoretical issues such as the interfaces between phonology and grammar, and between tonal morphology and tonal syntax.

A Postmodern Curriculum Perspective on Oral ESP Teaching

P8

Dan CHEN

Under the present background of economic globalization, as well as the change of educational concept of college English in China, EGP is generally replaced by ESP which might become trend of times. It has become a necessary ability for an international talent to master oral English communication under the ESP background. However, there are many problems existing in the oral ESP courses. The paper takes Doll’s Postmodern Curriculum Perspective into consideration, emphasizes 4Rs, and inspires the positioning, target and content, orientation, teacher- student relationship and evaluation systems in oral ESP courses. The paper hopes to ensure the importance of oral ESP courses, and enhance the teaching effectiveness.

Finding a testing ground for linguistic complexity hypotheses

P9

Nadine OTTING

Two fundamental assumptions have dominated research on linguistic complexity: First, the Equi-complexity hypothesis, which states that all languages are equally complex; and second, the Compensation hypothesis, which assumes that simplicity

in one grammatical area is counterbalanced by complexity in another. Long held as self-evident truisms, these hypotheses are now being questioned for their empirical validity. This presentation will assess the difficulty of finding a testing ground for these hypotheses.

**Process description of translating English verbs with imperative aspect P10
to Filipino and their translatability**

Mariyel Hiyas C. LIWANAG

Medical materials are considered to be one of the popular texts for technical translation as the outputs are used not only by medical practitioners but also by patients who have less knowledge about the field. This paper deconstructs and describes the process involved in several bilingual pamphlets from Medline Plus in terms of translating English verbs with imperfective aspect (habitual or continuous) to Filipino. For habitual aspect, three points were observed. The first one is the use of *ay* in order to posit similar situational features or diminish the situational features. The second and third points are the importance of certain features of verb such as the focus and the temporal frame. On the other hand, translations of continuous aspects posit lack of situational features and mismatch of meanings due to categorical change, inappropriate translation correspondence due to lack of totality of meaning, or disagreement in aspect.

Diversity and homogeneity: Images of ethnic minorities in Hong Kong P11

Kara FLEMING

Talking about diversity can ironically involve processes of homogenization, when that diversity involves organizing individuals into bounded, sometimes exoticized, social groups. This poster will present some ways in which the tensions between diversity and homogeneity play out in Hong Kong with regard to South Asian ethnic minorities. Using data from ethnographic research in a multiethnic secondary school as well as analysis of media sources, this poster will focus particularly on the role of language in constructing these images.

**Is Vocabulary Knowledge Alone Sufficient for Second Language P12
Lexical Inferencing?**

Sihui KE

This study examined whether second language (L2) vocabulary knowledge alone is sufficient for L2 lexical inferencing in reading Chinese as a second language. In view of the potential influence of L2 morphological awareness and target word characteristics, two hypotheses were formulated: L2 vocabulary knowledge contributes directly to inferring the meanings of unknown monomorphemic multi-character words; L2 vocabulary knowledge also contributes indirectly through L2 MA to inferring the meanings of unknown bimorphemic words. A set of paper-and-pencil test was administered among 60 English-speaking learners of Chinese as a second

language, measuring their vocabulary knowledge, morphological awareness, and lexical inferencing ability in Chinese. Preliminary findings confirmed current hypotheses, indicating that L2 vocabulary knowledge alone is necessary but insufficient for L2 lexical inferencing, and the contribution of L2 vocabulary knowledge is altered by L2 MA in reading different types of morphologically complex words.

Tone Sandhi in the Nanjing dialect

P13

Christopher OAKDEN

This paper examines disyllabic tone sandhi phenomena in the Nanjing dialect, a dialect of Mandarin. The tonal model offered by Duanmu (1990, 1994) is adopted as the preferred means of representation of the tonal inventory and sandhi patterns in this language, despite the theory's lack of support in contemporary discussions of Chinese phonology. Analysis of disyllabic tone sandhi is conducted through the framework of Optimality Theory (Prince and Smolensky 1993); a combination of OCP-based (Goldsmith 1976, Leben 1973) constraints and Local Conjunction (Green 1993, Smolensky 1993, Moreton and Smolensky 2002) in the analysis underlie the unique typological features of this dialect's tone system.

Tones in Cantonese English and Musical Intervals

P14

Suki S.Y. YIU

It has been shown that the relative pitch levels of Cantonese tones closely correspond to musical intervals (MIs). Given that an emerging tone language, Cantonese English, has developed tone under the substrate influence of Cantonese, this paper examines the correspondence between the newly emerged tones and MIs, and how the musical analogy relates to those established for Cantonese.

The fundamental frequencies of the tones produced by six speakers of Cantonese English were extracted with Praat, then time-normalized across rhymes. The mean values of the interval points of two tones were expressed in terms of ratio, then matched with the closest MI on the musical scale.

This paper demonstrates that the pitch levels of tones in Cantonese English correspond to MIs, given the converging ranges of MIs for different speakers and similar MIs of different tone pairs for different speakers. It also shows that the MIs of tones in Cantonese English are related to the corresponding tone pairs for Cantonese. The viability of MI as a means to understand the tonal system of non-tonal languages whose speakers' native language is tonal extends the link between the use of pitch in speech tones and music.

Following Aikhenvaldian definition and classification of Evidentiality (AIKHENVALD 2004), we have analyzed 28 Naxi dialects. Most of them show a two-way distinction, VIS unmarked & NVIS marked, while it is neutralized in other dialects. Besides, we have identified 5 main grammaticalization paths of evidentials:

- (1) 'hear' (nxq) > NVIS,
- (2) Old 'say' (nxq) > REP / QUOT,
- (2') New 'say' / 'call' / 'tell' > REP / QUOT / REP.ST,
- (3) 'face' + EXIST / 'feet' + EXIST / 'have been' / 'put, leave' > INF,
- (4) 'don't know' / 'haven't figured out' (nxq) > INF.ST, and
- (5) EXIST (nxq) > VIS > CERT > MIR (possibly).

Diachronically, Evidentiality in Modern NXQ (Dayan Town) splits into more subcategories than 60-70ish years ago. Inter-dialectally, NXQs have more evidentials than NRU does. Specifically, they have parallel paths (2', 3), but unparallel ones (1, 2, 4) only in NXQs. To wind up, Evidentiality is just an emerging grammatical category, especially in NRU, and has cognitive and neuro-physiological motivations.

An Analysis of Suffixes “-er” and “-zi” as Countable Markers in the Xuzhou Dialect

It has been widely accepted that the suffixes “-er” and “-zi” in Mandarin are nominal markers. But some scholars believe that they are nouns' countable markers. This thesis examines the suffixes “-er” and “-zi” in the Xuzhou dialect (a Central Plains Mandarin) to find more evidences on the relations between the two suffixes and nouns' countability. A dictionary survey and a questionnaire survey were conducted. We investigated the distribution of “-er” and “-zi” following nouns and searched for distinct intuition among native speakers. The proportion of the nouns with “-er” or “-zi” to the total number of the countable nouns was low while the uncountable nouns preceding the suffixes showed a fixed pattern. The intuition that “-er” and “-zi” should follow countable nouns was not found. A clear line was drawn between the nouns with and without the suffixes. Therefore, our experimental results indicate that “-er” and “-zi” are not nouns' countable markers in the Xuzhou dialect. The distribution of “-er” and “-zi” in the Xuzhou dialect is highly specific to individual nouns.

Influence of the German multiethnolect *Kiezdeutsch* and Turkish first names on the grading of school essays – A language attitude study **P17**

Linda JOHN

The present study aimed to investigate whether attitudes towards linguistic varieties and a perceived ethnic background of speakers do influence the grading of school essays. 157 teacher trainees from the University of Potsdam had been asked to each grade an identical school essay which only differed in the attitude items 'linguistic variety' and 'ethnically marked first name'. The study has shown that school essays containing the multiethnolect *Kiezdeutsch* (Neighborhood German) – which is perceived by the media and the public opinion as a “poorly performed German spoken by adolescents from Turkish immigrant background” – are assessed worse than those containing structures of Dominant German. These results could be observed even more strongly when the essay supposedly came from a speaker who had a Turkish marked first name. The results indicate that the assessment of the performance of children and adolescents in school depends on the perception of how close or far the individual student is situated to the linguistic and social norm.